

Executive Committee for Highway Safety
Keeping Drivers Alert & Increasing Driver Safety Awareness
Working Group Meeting Minutes – Mtg. #2
May 27, 2004

Location:

UNC HSRC, Chapel Hill @ 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members in Attendance:

Doug Robertson	Kimberly Overton	Don Ferrier	Jane Stutts
Adam Fisher	Tom Crosby	Maj. Randy Tysinger	Ben Zarzaur
Nicole Burris	Kate Bowman	Brad Hibbs	Kevin Lacy
Cliff Braam	Jackie Johnson		

Scribe:

Cliff Braam

Minutes:

- The meeting began at approximately 10:10 a.m.

Welcome/Introductions

- Doug welcomed everyone and the group introduced themselves once again since there were several new members present.

Summary of Charge

- Cliff provided the group with a brief overview of the Executive Committee for Highway Safety (ECHS), and how the working groups were developed. He stated that the desired outcome of the working group was to develop a working plan to present to the ECHS. As part of this effort, the group will need to research and analyze the given issue (keeping drivers alert), along with countermeasures, cost (monetary & personnel), potential barriers and other issues of importance to be included in the plan that is presented to the ECHS.

Problem Overview Update

At the last meeting, the group asked for some additional data items to be analyzed. This was done and the results were presented to the group via handouts. These issues included:

- Break out data by driver condition
 - Break out data by Commercial Motor Vehicle
 - Break out data by age
- At the last meeting, there was also a request to review data where the form changed in 2000 to determine possible reasons for drop in numbers when new form went into effect. This appears to be in part due to the options that were/are available when reporting injury levels. Prior to 2000, the investigating officers choices were limited to either “K, A, B, C or O”.

Often if the condition of an occupant was unknown (due to several possible factors such as they had already been transported), it is anticipated that the officer may have reported the injury at the level he felt appropriate based upon talking to witnesses, etc. In 2000, there was an additional option added to the choices for injury level; “Unknown”. Year 2000 – 2002 data show that there are 7,500 – 8,000 injuries that are reported each year as “Unknown”. This may be part of the reason for the drop in injury levels between the years 1999 and 2000.

Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphs show that there are fewer older drivers involved in the crashes, but there are more of them being fatally injured.
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the new form was being developed, there was an effort not to allow there to be “easy outs”. Due to the number of additional choices provide on the new form, the thought is that the data being collected is more accurate.

- Cliff also mentioned that Traffic Engineering is working to develop a web site that will have posted all information and activities for the ECHS and each of the current six working groups.

Demo/Presentation of Camera Distractions

- Jane gave a presentation on distracted data. Listed below are some of the highlights. As soon as the web site is available, we will post Jane’s presentation.

Jane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest source of distraction is objects or events outside of the vehicle (29.4%). This is likely the largest category due to the fact that it lumps so many issues together (is a broad category). Other issues, are more specific and harder to identify as well (i.e. cell phone use, eating/drinking, adjusting climate controls, etc.)
Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One study has shown that using cell phone whether hands free or not, relegates the driver to the same condition as if they were legally impaired/drunk.
Jane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase II – On Road Driving Data. Installed video cameras in cars to collect video from 70 drivers in North Carolina and in Pennsylvania. Video shows three different views of the driver; close up of face to see the eyes of the driver and what they were looking at, wide screen to see other things in the car (are they looking for something, reaching for a child, etc.) and one showing outside of the car to see what was going on. • Jane showed an example of the tape that was collected (over 210 hours). • The tapes were coded as to what the driver was doing as well as what was going on in the surrounding environment. • Outcome measures broken out into 1) hands on steering wheel, 2) eyes on roadway/driving task, 3) vehicle position in travel lane and 4) sudden braking. Unfortunately could not measure cognitive demand.
Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to try to decipher what is a good distraction vs. a bad distraction.
Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any idea of which of the distraction activities are worse as related to loss of

	cognitive skills? i.e. how distracting is the activity?
Jane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hard to measure the “intensity” of the distraction. Cell phones are distracting in many ways: cognitive, manual (dialing the number), visual (eyes looking at keypad while driving), audio (listening to the phone).
Kim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would be hard to measure; the more that you do an activity, the better you get at doing it. There are a lot of variables that would need to be considered.
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That’s what Tom is saying. Need to get at what distraction(s) are more severe and potentially have the biggest impact.
Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will not be able to legally change the way people act/ behave in a vehicle. If you can not legally make people do or not do something, then how can you make it as safe as possible? Hard to change behavior. For example, with all of the PR, etc for seat belts, we still have 1 out of 7 people who do not wear their seatbelts.

Brainstorming/Open Discussion

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Name	Discussion
Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passed out an example of a framework that the group could use to collect ideas/thoughts about how we may address the issues. We need to make sure that there is some direction and that we have deliverables in mind. Two issues, Keeping drivers Alert and Increasing Driver Safety Awareness. Do we want to keep these together or separate them into two issues and address individually in two separate break out work groups. The handout is just to get you thinking about how to approach the issues and can be modified in any way the group sees fit.
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jane’s data provides a good starting point of what the issues are and what we need to begin to look at.
Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pick one thing and make a strong effort to address. Distracted & keeping drivers alert behind the wheel may be a good place to start.
Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What I’m hearing is that our initial focus should be on 1) distracted drivers and 2) drowsy drivers. Develop a plan for each of these areas. Do we treat keeping drivers alert (KDA) and increasing driver safety awareness (DSA) together or separately?
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think that the ECHS combined because they saw Increasing Driver Safety Awareness as a possible countermeasure to the Keeping Drivers Alert.
Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isn’t everything in DSA, fit into the KDA? Each working group should have increasing driver safety awareness as a component of what they are doing. Increasing driver safety awareness should be an issue for all of the working groups. Therefore, let’s combine it into the KDA as a component.
Cliff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep the DSA as an educational component of the main focus.
Kevin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick the DSA component back to the ECHS as a separate item/issue that will need to be addressed. Indicate that it is an over all strategy that will likely be

	addressed in all of the other emphasis areas as well.
Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have an agreement to develop a plan for the distracted driver and drowsy drivers and then look for possible commonalties for the two and move forward from there.
Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From Jane's presentation, defining the problem should not be a big problem.
Jane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jane is working on the NCHRP guide that combines distracted & drowsy driving. She has a copy of the preliminary "draft" for the guide. A copy of what she has was distributed to the group. Will have a group of 15-20 people providing feedback to the draft guides.
Kim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drowsy driver legislation is a big national effort right now. (Maggie's Law)
Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is our charge to pull everything together and make recommendations to the ECHS.
Don	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What we have talked about so far, is reactive. We need to also consider the proactive component.
Tom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC does not have any additional education requirement once we have gotten our initial license. Need to look at this issue to force people to make changes. Develop ways to retest cognitive skills.

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Action Items:

Name	Item
Cliff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map data for KDA crashes.
Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend to the ECHS that the issue of "increasing driver safety awareness" be addressed over all of the issues/working groups. This is an educational component for all WG.
Jane/Doug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will get some base line definitions and initial "meat" on the skeleton for group consideration and discussion.
Everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What programs, activities, laws, policies, practices, etc. exist that you are aware of that relate to KDA. What else do you think needs to be done, based upon what you know up to this point. What else would contribute/be beneficial to our efforts here.
Cliff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send Don & Randy copies of initial data slides.
Cliff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk with Doug and Commissioner Tatum concerning the competency. Need to measure knowledge, skills, cognitive levels, etc.

NEXT MEETING: July 8, 2004 1:30 – 3:30, UNC HSRC